

BLUE MOUNTAIN, Miss. – Courtney Atkinson led three players in double figures with 19 points as Cumberland hung on for a 56-51 victory Thursday night at Blue Mountain College in women's basketball action.

The Bulldogs (11-12, 6-5 TranSouth) did little right in the first half, committing nine turnovers and shooting just 25 percent (7-of-28) from the field. CU went almost 12 minutes without a field goal at one point during the period, with Tasia Blue's layup with 2:50 remaining ending the drought. Cumberland hit four free throws for its only points during the stretch.

It looked to be much the same to start the second half, as BMC's Jessi Hayles nailed two straight 3-pointers to begin the period, prompting a timeout from CU head coach Jeremy Lewis. The Bulldogs responded with a 13-2 spurt to tie the game at 32 and finally took their first lead of the game at 36-35 with a bucket by Jessica Pace.

The teams went back-and-forth the rest of the game, with nine lead changes and neither team leading by more than four points until the final minute of the game. Hayles kept the Toppers (3-19, 0-11) in the game with 19 points, including three 3-pointers, but Atkinson and Pace continued to make baskets and Casie Cowan added two big trifectas, the final one with 1:52 to play that gave CU a 54-49 lead.

Samantha Burns drove for a layup for Blue Mountain and the Bulldogs missed a jumper on the next trip down the floor, giving the home team a chance to tie. But Amber Johnson's 3-pointer was well off the mark and after a foul, Atkinson broke free for a final layup and CU's sixth win in the last seven games.

Samantha Harper provided some much-needed energy off the bench for Cumberland, especially, in the second half, and led the club with seven rebounds. Cowan finished with 12 points, 10 in the second half, and Pace grabbed six boards.

Hayles led the Toppers with 19 points and Shaquinta Robinson posted 11.

Lady Bulldogs ease past Blue Mtn.

Thursday, February 9, 2012

Cumberland hosts rival Trevecca Nazarene on Saturday at 2 p.m. in the second game of a stretch where the Bulldogs will play five games in 10 days.